THE

STATUE ROOM,

AN

HISTORICAL TALE.

VOL. II.

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE

STATUE ROOM;

AN

HISTORICAL TALE.

BY

Miſs *BALLIN.*

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

" Love his golden ſhafts employs; here lights
" His conſtant lamps, and waves his purple wings:
" Here reigns and revels in court amours,
" Mixt dance, or wanton maſk, or midnight ball.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

THE STATUE ROOM.

BOOK THE THIRD,

[Continued.]

NOTHING remarkable happened till within a month of the time that Adelfrida was to preſent the Duke with a pledge of their mutual love. Madame de Navarre was again obliged to be the friend of the princely lovers; for which purpoſe the following ſcheme was propoſed. The Marchioneſs was to requeſt of the Queen to permit Adelfrida to ſpend a couple of months with her. She was there to lay-

in. After which Madame de Navarre was to retire to France with the infant, under the pretence of having her own child educated, which was three years and a half old. As ſoon as ſhe was arrived there, the Duke and Adelfrida were to join her, and their marriage was then to be openly avowed. This point being ſettled, the Marchioneſs requeſted the favour of Adelfrida's company. Elizabeth, who ſeldom refuſed the requeſts of her favourites, gave her conſent; and Adelfrida returned home with her. In due time the Princeſs was delivered of a daughter; it was baptized by the name of Romelia Catharine; and the child and its mother were in a fair way of doing well. One day Madame de Navarre was

ſitting

ſitting alone with Adelfrida, when a ſervant informed her that a ſtranger deſired to ſpeak with her. She went down to him, and he preſented her with the following letter:

TO THE

Marchioneſs De Navarre.

"ALAS! madam, you are addreſſed by a miſerable victim "to misfortune — an old man, "ſcarce able to reſiſt the tot-"terings of infirmity; and whoſe "life is become additionally bur-"thenſome, by the loſs he has juſt "now ſuſtained in the death of a "darling daughter. He has now "nothing left that can give him a "reliſh for life—the ſource of "his comfort is fled for ever. "Ah! how my hand trembles at

" informing you, that my dear,
" my lovely Anne, is no more.

" I was ſeized with a violent fit
" of the gout, which obliged the
" dear girl to viſit me, juſt as you
" acquainted her with the delivery
" of your friend. In conſequence
" of which, and as I was a lit-
" tle recovered, ſhe prepared
" to return to town; and that
" ſhe might accelerate her jour-
" ney, ſhe choſe to go on horſe-
" back, attended only by two
" ſervants. The road being ex-
" ceeding bad, her horſe ſtumbled,
" and not being able to recover
" himſelf, fell to the ground; and
" with him my beloved Anne,
" who was killed on the ſpot.

" Oh wretched Huntingdon!
" what a ſtab to thy happineſs!
" The rankling wound lies bleed-
" ing at my heart! How frail

is

"is nature! This ſtroke of an-
"gry fate, is by far too much for
"me to encounter! I am unable
"to repel the force of a blow ſo
"terrifick and unexpected. Alas!
"madam, I cannot ſurvive it long!
"I do not wiſh it; rather let me
"fly to the regions of immorta-
"lity, there again to embrace
"the child of my heart!"

"THE reaſon that has induced
"me to write this incoherent
"ſcrawl is, that you may gradually
"inform the Princeſs with the me-
"lancholy news; leſt by her hear-
"ing it in an abrupt manner, it
"ſhould be too affecting for her
"preſent indiſpoſition to ſupport.

"I am, madam,
"with the higheſt reſpect,
"the unhappy
"HUNTINGDON."

THE Marchioneſs wiped the tears from her face, and returned to the Princeſs's chamber, where the following dialogue took place:

Adelfrida. "Has any thing happened, my dear Violette, you appear ſo uneaſy?"

Marchioneſs. "No, my love, nothing very particular."

Adel. "Don't deem me inquiſitive; but I am ſure ſomething has happened."

March. "Well, if you muſt know, I have received a letter from Lady Anne Haſtings."

Adel. "Oh, heavens! my dear Anne is ill."

March. Don't, my dear, agitate your ſpirits, when there is no occaſion. Lady Anne is indiſpoſed; and therefore is ſorry that ſhe cannot

not come to you. Her diſeaſe however is not dangerous."

Adel. "Oh! I am ſure ſhe is very ill; or ſhe would not have ſent a letter."

The Marchioneſs was now ſorry that ſhe had mentioned the letter; and knew not how to divert the attention of the Princeſs from ſo painful a ſubject; when ſhe was happily relieved by the preſence of the Duke.

Duke. "What is the matter, ladies? You ſeem to be in a high debate."

Adel. "My Anne is dying, and Violette endeavours to conceal it from me."

March. "Well, my love, ſuppoſe ſhe is, you cannot be of any ſervice to her."

Adel.

Adel. "Oh! for heaven's ſake, ſpeak out. Is my Anne alive?"

Duke. "If ſhe ſhould not, my ſweeteſt, it is the will of heaven; and to that will we ought implicity to ſubmit."

Adel. "Oh! my Anne! my Anne!" She could ſcarce make this exclamation before ſhe became inſenſible, and ſunk back in her chair. A ſucceſſion of fits, which terminated in a fever, rendered the Duke almoſt a maniac. For ſome time her life was deſpaired of; but at length the fever left her, and a perfect recovery happily ſucceeded.

THE period arrived that her Highneſs was to return to court; and a few days after Madame de Navarre took leave of the Queen, and haſtened to France with the young

young Romelia and her own daughter. A few weeks followed, when the Duke pretended that urgent buſineſs called him to France; and that he muſt depart in the courſe of a week. Out of reſpect, therefore, to his Highneſs. the Queen gave a ball before he left England.

The Duke viſited Adelfrida the morning of the ball, in order to preſent her with ſome jewels; and he ſtayed ſome time in converſation with her. He had a peculiar weakneſs in his conſtitution, which occaſioned him to faint at the ſcent of roſes. The Princeſs had that day an abundance of thoſe flowers in pots about her chamber. The Duke, who had no eyes but for his Adelfrida, did not perceive them; by which means they

they ſoon began to affect him. His fair wife was greatly amazed at ſeeing him on a ſudden change colour, and ſink into one of her maid's arms, who alſo obſerving him, had advanced purpoſely for his ſupport. At this unfortunate inſtant the Queen, who had unluckily choſen to viſit Adelfrida, entered the room. She found the Princeſs in diſorder; the Duke of Anjou ſtretched on the floor, and four or five women about him, with that earneſtneſs, natural on ſuch a melancholy occaſion. What an unſeaſonable moment for ſo unfriendly a viſitant to enter!

Generous minds feel a pleaſure in ſeeing thoſe they love univerſally eſteemed; but it was not ſo with the tyrant Queen. A thouſand reaſons rendered her ſuſpi-

ciouſly

ciouſly penetatring; and ſhe attributed the Duke's ſwoon to the effect of his tranſport. She judged, that it muſt have proceeded from ſome extraordinary cauſe; and gave herſelf entirely over to diabolical conjectures.

In the interval, the whole of the attendants were endeavouring to bring the Duke to himſelf; and Elizabeth even ſent for her own phyſicians; by whoſe aſſiſtance he at length recovered.—But, ah! it were better for him, had he been ſuſpended entirely from the knowledge of his exiſtence. To what new ſorrows did he awake! O unhappy Anjou!

When the Duke opened his eyes, and ſaw the Queen by his ſide, he was ſomewhat aſtoniſhed; but recovering himſelf a little,

and

and perceiving the roſes in the room, he thus addreſſed her: "Thoſe, madam, are the cauſe of my fainting," pointing to the flowers; "the ſame accident has often befallen me in the court of France. It is a diſorder that has followed me from my birth; and for which I can find no remedy. There are few people but are acquainted that it is a weakneſs particularly attached to my family."

THIS was not a ſufficient explanation for Elizabeth. Jealouſy furniſhed her with one more natural, and more ſuited with the averſion ſhe had for Adelfrida. She wiſhed for an opportunity to criminate the unfortunate victim of her revenge, in order to fortify her own mind againſt the horrors of conſcience, that might ſucceed the

the crime ſhe was about to perpetrate.

ELIZABETH was no ſooner dreſſed, but ſhe went into her cloſet, and took from a caſket a paper of poiſon, which ſhe had carefully furniſhed herſelf with. With this horrid precaution, ſhe waited for the Duke, who in a moment after came to attend her to the ball.

THE aſſembly was very brilliant, and the Queen and Adelfrida walked up and down the room, arm in arm. It being very warm, the Queen called Lady Latimer, who had previous inſtructions, and gave her the paper; at the ſame time begged her to get a couple of glaſſes of lemonade from the refreſhment room, for Adelfrida and herſelf. Lady Latimer obeyed.

obeyed. Elizabeth preſented it to Adelfrida with her own hands—the innocent victim drank with pleaſure, as the weather was very warm. It ſoon took its effect, and ſhe was obliged to retire to her chamber. The next morning ſhe was delirious; the Queen's phyſicians were called; they preſcribed ſomething that recovered her ſenſes; but unanimouſly agreed, that ſhe was poiſoned. The news ſpread—the poor Duke was informed of it, but could ſcarcely believe. In an inſtant he flew to the chamber of the Princeſs. He found her ſurrounded by ſix or eight weeping attendants. As ſoon as he entered the room, Adelfrida, weak as ſhe was, lifted herſelf up on her pillow, and faintly articulated, "It is with

grief

grief of ſoul, I tell you, O my deareſt Anjou, that I am certainly poiſoned. I was reſtored to my liberty only to be deprived of life; but the cruelty of my fortune has warded off the fatal blow, until I have felt the force of maternal love, to make me die with more regret. Tell my Violette, that my laſt breath was ſpent for bleſſing on her; and tell her to love my little Romelia for the ſake of her unfortunate mother. I confeſs that I am more ſenſible of this ſtroke, for your and my child's ſake, than I ſhould otherwiſe have been. The loſs of life is indifferent to me; but to loſe you!—Ah! that is the pang!"

At that inſtant Elizabeth entered the room, with an artful pre-

tence

tence of enquiring after the health of Adelfrida. As ſoon as ſhe approached the bed, the Princeſs turned her head to the other ſide; and when the Queen aſked her how ſhe did? ſhe gave her no anſwer.

"I intreat you, my dear," ſaid Elizabeth, "to tell me how you find yourſelf?"

"Oh, madam," replied Adelfrida, "let me die in peace: grant me, at leaſt, in theſe my laſt moments what you have denied me during my life."

"She raves! without doubt," ſaid the Queen.

ELIZABETH had ſcarce ſpoke, before Adelfrida exlaimed in a tone of horror, "Oh, my God! I die! I am going, my Anjou! Live, and be happy—Live for the

ſake

ſake of our———She would have ſaid more, but death claimed his rights,—and with a ſoft groan, ſhe expired.

"SHE is dead," exclaimed the Duke, "and I ſtill live! Oh heaven! take away a life which is become a burthen." Then going up to the Queen, "Cruel woman!" ſaid he, "finiſh what you have begun, by giving me of the ſame cup."

SHE pretended not to hear him; but ſat with her eyes all bedewed with tears, The Prince, who had no longer any occaſion to reſtrain himſelf, again addreſſed her.

"Is it, madam, becauſe you are not ſatisfied, that you weep; and do you ſtill want ſome other victim? If your tears demand

blood, I reſign unto you with pleaſure, a life, which you have rendered a thouſand times more horrible than death itſelf!"

"INSULT not over an unhappy woman," ſaid Elizabeth, carrying on her diſſimulation to the utmoſt. "If you ſeek only to be at variance with me————;"

"YOU have long ſince delivered me from that pain" interrupted the Duke; "and it is the only favour I could expect from you, after the knowledge I have had. Go on, madam, enjoy a uſurped crown; I do not envy you the fruits of your wickedneſs. Nothing would induce me to wiſh for life, but the hopes of revenge: but I muſt have recourſe to means leſs infamous; nor ſhall your example ever

ever inſtruct me in the arts of poiſon or treachery."

When the Duke had finiſhed ſpeaking, he departed from the chamber, and returned to his lodgings. No ſooner had he entered the room where Du Lac was, than he exclaimed, "She is dead! my Ahelfrida is no more!" Du Lac could ſcarce believe him. "It is too true!" replied the Duke, "I ſaw her expire with my own eyes. O that my grief would produce the ſame effect on my feeble frame, as the poiſon which deprived me of her invaluable life!"

His Highneſs immediately gave orders for his departure from England. He went through the Netherlands, on his return to France; but

but was taken ill at the Chateau de Terierre. The aid of phyſicians was called, but to no purpoſe. Finding, therefore, his end draw near, he called Du Lac to his bed ſide, and giving him a large parcel of papers, addreſſed him, as in the following chapter.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

" ——————— health viſit pays
" Where fortune ſmiles; the wretched he
" forſakes.
" Swift on his downy pinions flies from
" woe,
" And lights on lids unſullied with a tear."

HIS Highneſs preſented his faithful valet Du Lac with a ring. "Accept this," ſaid he, "as a token of my eſteem for your faithful ſervices; and as ſomething to enable you to remember me, when I am no more. Take this parcel to France, and deliver it to no one but Madame de Navarre. It will enable my child to keep up her rank. I would not have the Daughter of

Adelfrida become either a beggar or a dependent on the bounty of another. The Marchioneſs will take care of her, during her infancy. At a proper period ſhe may, if ſhe likes, preſent her to the King of France, as the daughter of his brother; and I am ſure my Henry will acknowledge her for his niece. Give the Marchioneſs theſe bracelets; they are the pictures of her Adelfrida and the wretched Anjou: bid her accept them for the ſake of the expiring donor." Du Lac received the ring from his maſter, with a mixture of gratitude and affection. He promiſed to fulfil his truſt; and at the ſame time endeavoured to diſperſe the thoughts of death from the mind of the

Duke.

Duke. He expired however, the next day, in the arms of his faithful domeſtick. The Duke died in the bloom of his youth, regreted by all the world, except Elizabeth; who was pleaſed at ſeeing herſelf releaſed from ſo formidable an enemy.

As ſoon as the remains of the Duke were conſigned to their native duſt, with all proper dignity, Du Lac haſtened to France. He delivered the papers and the meſſages to the Marchioneſs; and ſhe exclaimed in an agony of grief, "No, no, I will never ſeek to decorate Romelia, with laurels of royalty; it is that which involved the charming Adelfrida, her mother, in a ſucceſſion of cruel misfortunes."

Du

Du Lac returned to England, and purchaſed a ſmall cottage, whither he retired from the noiſe and diſquietude of a tireſome world. The Marchioneſs took on herſelf the education of her own daughter, and that of the royal orphan; and nothing remarkable happened, till Adelaide Victoria, the former, was nineteen years of age, and Romelia the latter, almoſt ſixteen. Perhaps it will not be improper to give a deſcription of the Daughter of Adelfrida.

She was in perſon rather tall, but comely; her face was oval, her eyes dark blue; and alternately poſſeſſing a deal of penetrating fire and languiſhing moſt bewitching; her eye-brows were dark and beautifully arched: her noſe was rather inclined to the Grecian;

Grecian; her mouth was ſmall, and her teeth enchanting. To add to this, her hair was of a a pale flaxen, and of an elegant length; her ſkin ſo tranſparently white, that you could diſtinguiſh the ſanguine circulation through the azure veins of her hands and arms. Her diſpoſition was generous, affectionate, tender, and polite; at the ſame time ſhe was ſenſible of the leaſt injury or affront. She was formed by nature of ſo enterpriſing a ſpirit, that ſhe never formed a reſolution, but what ſhe was ſure to fulfil. She had a kind eccentricity peculiar to herſelf; and if her ſpirits were in the leaſt agitated, it would affect her for two or more days. She had juſt arrived at her ſixteenth year, when an unexpected affair obliged the

Marchioneſs

Marchioneſs once more to viſit England. It was the death of the Duke of Somerſet, who had left her guardian to his two daughters. The title and eſtate fell to his ſon; an eſtate in Suſſex he left to Lord Henry Seymour, his adopted ſon; and all the money was divided between the Lady Auguſta and Lady Matilda, except a legacy to the Marchioneſs. When Madame de Navarre informed her two daughters, as ſhe called them, of her intended voyage to England, Romelia exclaimed haughtily, at the ſame time putting her hands on her breaſt, "I go to England—I viſit a nation that is governed by the murderer of my mother!" She had been informed of the hiſtory of her parents. A moment after ſhe continued

tinued, "yes, I will go,—I'll ſee this female monſter!" Accordingly every thing was prepared; and after a pleaſant voyage, they arrived in England; where they were received by the Seymour's family with joy. Romelia and Lady Matilda conceived a friendſhip for each other, that ended only in death. The affairs of the late Duke, were ſoon ſettled. Madame de Navarre had an elegant houſe prepared for her; and Lord Henry and the two ſiſters reſided with her.

As ſoon as the Queen was informed, that Madame de Navarre was in England, ſhe ſent for her, and received her with great cordiality. She likewiſe requeſted her company for the next day, and begged her to bring her daughter

daughter likewiſe. When the Marchioneſs informed Adelaide of it, Romelia was preſent, and immediately ſaid, "Permit me, alſo to attend you, dear madam; let me ſee the deſtroyer of my mother. O had I the power of a baſiliſk, to ſtrike the monſter dead."

THE next day the Marchioneſs attended the young ladies to court. She introduced Lady Adelaide Victoria de Navarre to the Queen. She then took the hand of Romelia. At the ſight of whom, the Queen ſtarted back, and exclaimed, in a tone of affright, "Who is this you have brought, Violette?'

"THE daughter of my huſband's ſiſter. Permit me to introduce to your Majeſty Lady Romelia de Liancourt, my neice."

"You

"You are welcome to England, fair lady," ſaid the Queen, recovering herſelf. Romelia haughtily half bent her body, and returned the compliment with a contemptuous air. Nor do we ſo much wonder at it; it diſcovered at leaſt, a filial piety, and a noble and generous nature. Madame de Navarre knew that Romelia's impetuoſity would be ungovernable on this occaſion, and therefore, ſhe dreaded the conſequence; and haſtily concluded the interview.

Lord Henry gazed on the charms of Romelia with rapture; and became a willing captive at the ſhrine of love. A mutual attachment ſucceeded, though diffidence forbade his Lordſhip to make his declaration; and they were

were ſtrangers, for ſome time, to the ſecrets of each others boſom.

Lady Auguſta Seymour had been for a conſiderable while addreſſed by Sir Moreton Grey. At length ſhe conſented to give him her hand; and the nuptial day being fixed, they were united. They had not been married above a month, before Sir Moreton had an occaſion to viſit Scotland; whither he was accompanied by his amiable wife.

Not long after, the Count de St. Clare, a French nobleman, viſited England; and being frequently in company with the Marchioneſs's family, he was captivated with the charms of the gentle Adelaide. He determined therefore, the next day to viſit her mother, and make enquiry whether ſhe was engaged.

engaged. That very morning Lord Henry made a declaration of his love to Romelia, who referred him to the Marchioneſs. He then aſked the conſent of Madame de Navarre; and the good woman, thinking that if Romelia was ſettled with a man ſhe loved, ſhe would be bleſſed with conſentment in a happy obſcurity, gave her conſent. She concluded, that Romelia in ſuch a ſituation, would neither wiſh nor deſire to claim any right to which ſhe might be entitled by birth; and that conſequently ſhe would eſcape thoſe viciſſitudes to which her mother had been previouſly a victim. Madame de Navarre had no ſooner coincided with Lord Henry's requeſt, than the Count de St. Clare was announced. She had now another

conſent

conſent to grant; which ſhe did on condition that it was perfectly agreeable to her daughter. Adelaide approved of his ſentimental aſſiduities; and felt herſelf particularly attached to him. Every thing therefore was adjuſted, and the union of the two pair quickly ſucceeded. After which Henry and his Romelia retired to Suſſex; Lady Matilda reſided with her friend, who was now called Lady Seymour. The Marchioneſs, Adelaide, and her huſband continued with them a month, and then returned to France.

THUS this amiable group was ſeparated; and the following correſpondence took place.

LETTER

LETTER I.

Lady Matilda Seymour, to the Counteſs De St. Clare.

Farnley Grove.

HENRY has left us, my dear Victoria. Your laſt words were to deſire me to inform you of every particular; "for I know well," ſaid you," that Romelia is fond of writing." In confirmation of your conjectures, and in obedience to your wiſhes, therefore, I ſhall be as particular as my memory will permit.

You have heard, no doubt, of the intereſting ſubject that engroſſes the converſation of all Europe — the Spaniſh Armada.

Lord Henry, accompanied by my ſiſter Auguſta's huſband, received orders to cruize along the coaſt of Flanders, fearing leſt the Duke of Medina Sedonia ſhould come through that country. Since he has been gone, which is near a fortnight, Romelia has been quite unhappy. She has this moment ſent to beg I would accompany her in a little walk; and, as I always comply with her requeſt, I muſt bid you adieu, for a ſhort time. Adieu, my love.

* * * * *

Alas! my friend, it is a long time ſince I began this letter. Misfortune has wafted her ſanguine wings over our habitation; and we are all completely wretched. The ſcene which now preſents

preſents itſelf to me is diſtracting. It is this—on a couch is ſeated the unhappy Romelia—in her left hand ſhe holds the miniature of her Henry, on which her eyes are inſenſibly fixed; on her right arm hangs a baſket of flowers, half of which are dead. At preſent ſhe appears to be deprived of her reaſon. "See!" ſhe exclaims, "theſe flowers died with my Henry—poor things—what a pity this ſweet carnation ſhould die! Is it not, Maltida?"——"Hapleſs, inconſolable Romelia!" ſighed I, as the tears ran down my pallid cheeks.

"You weep," ſaid ſhe. "I cannot ſee, my eyes are dim; but my heart burns.—It ſcorches me to death.—It annihilates me!——Feel," continued ſhe, riſing,

and putting my hand to her boſom, "Does it not burn you?—Beloved Matilda, ſave me—ſee 'tis death, ghaſtly death, that aſſumes that form—how tremendous it does appear!—'tis my Henry!—ha! ſtop him, Matilda!—he is gone!—Come quickly, let us follow him!"

QUITE exhauſted, ſhe ſunk lifeleſs in my extended arms; but proper remedies being applied, ſhe, after an hour's inſenſibility, recovered: then preſſing my hand, ſhe cloſed her eyes, and compoſed herſelf to ſleep; and while ſhe ſlumbers, I am relating, as well as my diſcompoſed memory will permit, what has paſſed.

WHEN I left off writing, in order to accompany Romelia in a walk, the day was ſultry; and

and to evade the ſcorching rays of the ſun, we ſauntered along a ſhady walk, where an impenetrable hedge of yew intercepted his more radiant beams, and the gently waving branches of the alders, here and there planted on the oppoſite ſide, cauſed an artificial breeze, that ſoothed dejected fancy, and abated the fervor of the heat. At the end of this walk was the park; acroſs which we walked to the ſide of the ſea. The water was calm and temperate and a ſhip could be juſt diſtinguiſhed at a diſtance; when on a ſudden we were ſurprized by an unexpected ſtorm. The rain poured down in torrents — the rattling thunders clapped — the vivid lightenings flaſhed through the trees that ſhaded the park — the

leaves trembled—all nature ſeemed convulſed—horror fronted from every black cloud; and the the terrifying waves rolled in ſearch of deſtruction. The ſhip at length advanced. In vain did I entreat Romelia to return, her heart was too much intereſted in the fate of the ſhip; nor would ſhe move, though her clothes were already wet. The ſhip reeled from ſide to ſide, by the fury of the waves—all hands ſtrove to ſave the bark—their efforts were too feeble—the ſhip ſunk, and the horrible claſhing of the wreck ſtill vibates in my ears. The ſcreams of the unhappy mortals, made me tremble with horror. Every ſoul, as we thought, periſhed; when Romelia, claſping her hands exclaimed,

claimed, "Oh, thou avenging God! why didſt thou permit me to be a witneſs of ſuch a ſcene! At that inſtant a man aroſe on the ſurface of the water—he ſupported himſelf on a ſhattered plank, and combated the tremendous waves as well as he could. On a ſudden a large wave threw him on the ſhore, juſt at Romelia's feet; ſhe ſtooped to gaze at him—then in rapid ſucceſſion gave a ſhriek, and fainted. Picture to yourſelf, if poſſible, my ſituation! I had, fortunately, ſome drops in my pocket, which ſoon revived the hapleſs Romelia. "It is my love, my Henry," ſaid ſhe, as ſoon as ſhe could ſpeak. I now turned to the inſenſible man, whom I found to be my brother; and after a great deal of trouble, we had

had again the happineſs of ſeeing him breathe. The ſtorm had by this time ceaſed, and by our joint aſſiſtance, we got him with difficulty to the houſe. I had them both put to bed, and ſent for the firſt phyſician I could procure. Romelia's ſpirits were very much agitated; but happily terminated in a ſlight cold, which ſoon left her. Henry was confined to his chamber for three weeks; and as ſoon as he was well enough to be interrogated, I aſked him, how he came to return home? To which he replied, That as the Duke did not attempt to viſit the part where he was, and thinking the time an age that he had been from his Romelia, he had left the command to Sir Moreton; and he had hired a ſmall veſſel, with an

an intent to land at his own park, and ſend one of his men to appriſe Lady Seymour of his arrival. He intended, he ſaid, to continue two or three days, and return in the ſame manner that he came.

WHILE Henry was in England, the Duke unexpectedly made his appearance; but Sir Moreton was victorious. The Queen was immediately informed of it; and near the ſame time ſhe was alſo ſome how made acquainted with Henry's abſence from the ſeat of war. This aſtoniſhed her highly; and ſhe was at a loſs to know the place of his retreat. She ſoon, however, learned that he was at his own ſeat: orders were immediately diſpatched to command him to attend the Queen. She upbraided him with being a traitor; aſked him, who permitted him

him to give up his command? and ordered the Earl of Shrewſbury to take him in charge as a traitor to his Queen and country. Henry was, therefore, conveyed to the caſtle of the Earl, where he has been confined ever ſince. The news was no ſooner imparted to Romelia, than her ſenſes forſook her; in which condition ſhe ſtill remains. I am afflicted with a violent cold myſelf, which ſeized me on that fatal day; but the pains of my own perſon are of very little conſequence, compared with what I feel on the preſent occaſion.

ROMELIA has this moment awoke. She riſes herſelf on her couch, and appears rational.

HEAVEN, I thank thee, my Romelia is recovered—her ſen-

ſes

ſes are again returned. Adieu, adieu.

Your's,

MATILDA SEYMOUR.

POSTCRIPT.

REMEMBER me kindly to your affectionate Count, and my highly eſteemed friend the Marhioneſs.

LETTER

LETTER II.

Lady Matilda Seymour, to the Counteſs de St. Clare.

London.

MY dear Adelaide will not be ſurpriſed when ſhe is informed by the date of the place of Matilda's reſidence. I do not doubt but you will; but more ſo when you have read my epiſtle through. When I had finiſhed my laſt, I found Romelia perfectly in her ſenſes. She talked of her Henry, with a degree of reaſon that afforded me ſome ſatisfaction: when ſhe retired to-bed, I obſerved that ſhe laid a particular emphaſis on the words, *Adieu, Matilda!* The next morning

ing I viſited her chamber as ſoon as I aroſe, according to my general cuſtom, to enquire how ſhe had ſlept. How was I aſtoniſhed to find the room empty, and the bed untouched. I immediately rang the bell with violence. Two or three frighted attendants preſently made their appearance.—"Have either of you attended your miſtreſs this morning?" ſaid I. They all anſwered me in the negative. How diſtreſſing! I knew not what to do. At length I was relieved by one of the women eſpying a letter on the toilet, directed to me. I opened it haſtily, and found that Romelia had gone to London, in order to ſolicit the Queen to pardon her Henry, "I knew," ſaid ſhe, in her letter, "that had

I ac-

I acquainted you with my intention, you would have accompanied me; but you are not formed for ſuch trouble and fatigue: beſides, the thought was quite ſudden. You muſt, therefore, excuſe what may perhaps appear to you clandeſtine."—She mentioned that ſhe was attended by one ſervant; that ſhe was going to town on horſeback, and that ſhe would make my ſiſter Auguſta's houſe, (who was then in London) her home. I had no ſooner read this letter, than I ordered a ſimilar conveyance to be got ready for me; and attended only by a ſingle domeſtic, I ſat off directly for town. It was late in the evening before I arrived in London; and my ſiſter was aſtoniſhed to ſee me enter. I enquired

quired for Romelia, and was informed that ſhe was gone to bed, in order to recover from the fatigue of her journey. Feeling myſelf exceſſively tired, and having taken a little refreſhment, I alſo requeſted to be permitted to follow her. Romelia, the next morning, when I entered her room, abſolutely thought me an apparition.—"My dear dear girl," ſaid ſhe, "how will it ever be in my power to return your kindneſs?" ———

"And how will it ever be in my power," replied I, embracing her, "to forgive you for not permitting me to accompany you at firſt?"

"While Romelia was dreſſing for her interview with the Queen, I went to court, in order that I might

be there when ſhe came. I was always, you know, a favourite, with the Queen; and therefore, ſhe received me graciouſly; and called me, her ſweet Matilda. In a ſhort time, a guard advanced, and demanded an audience for Lady Seymour.—

"LADY Seymour," reiterated the Queen, "who is that? However admit her!" Romelia then entered—the Queen drew back—"that ſpectre again," ſaid ſhe, in a tone of affright; and catching hold of my hand, "Matilda," continued ſhe, "that image of Adelfrida continually haunts me!" —Romelia approached—never did human being look ſo celeſtial—heaven was in her countenance.—She was dreſſed in a long white ſattin robe, trimmed with point lace

lace, and white bugles—a pearl zone diſplayed her ſlender waiſt—on her head ſhe wore nothing but her own hair; which ſufficiently ornamented it—round her poliſhed wriſts ſhe had bracelets; on one the picture of her Henry, on the other the portrait of yourſelf. She gently knelt to the Queen.

"What is it you requeſt!" ſaid Elizabeth, haughtily? "I am come," replied Romelia, "humbly to ſolicit the releaſe of my huſband. Give but my Henry to me, and I requeſt no more."

"As the brother of Matilda, and the huſband of the niece of Madame de Navarre, I could pardon him; but as a traitor to his Queen and country, I muſt

refuſe your requeſt. My determination is fixed; and no power on earth can prevail on me to alter it."

In vain were our united entreaties. Romelia and Matilda knelt, and continued to implore; but to no purpoſe. We then returned home; and I was aſtoniſhed to ſee Romelia ſo indifferent about the matter. The next morning ſhe did not appear at breakfaſt. A ſervant was accordingly ſent up to enquire the cauſe; and the woman who attended her, ſaid, that her miſtreſs had ſpent a reſtleſs night, and juſt compoſed herſelf to ſleep. Some time after, when I thought ſhe would be awake, I viſited her chamber. I found no one there but the domeſtic; of whom I enquired

quired for Romelia. At firſt ſhe heſitated; but at length told me, that Lady Seymour had left the houſe before day-break.

"Left the houſe!" echoed I. "Where is ſhe gone?"

"I cannot tell you indeed, ma'am; all I know is this—As ſoon as ſhe returned home yeſterday afternoon with you, ſhe came up ſtairs; and giving me ſome gold, deſired me to get her a boy's habit; for which ſhe promiſed me a handſome reward. By dint of ſtratagem I got it for her: ſhe put it on. When the family were retired to-bed, and all was quiet, I aſſiſted her to unlock the door: we then went to the ſtable for her horſe, and ſhe rode off.

I immediately

I immediately went down ſtairs, and informed Auguſta of what had paſſed.

It is in vain, my dear ſiſter," replied ſhe, "to ſtop any thing Romelia undertakes; for ſhe will complete it. Let her, therefore, purſue her own track, and all I wiſh is, that ſhe may be ſucceſsful." Thus you ſee, my dear madam, we are now totally unacquainted with the place of her retreat: as ſoon, however, as we know, you ſhall hear again from,

"Your's,

"MATILDA SEYMOUR.

LETTER.

LETTER III.

Lady Seymour, to Lady Matilda Seymour.

I WRITE to you, my dear Matilda, from the cottage of Du Lac, the faithful domeſtic of my deceaſed father.

My woman has, no doubt, informed you in what diſguiſe I left the houſe; in which I travelled on to the ſeat of the Earl of Shrewſbury, the dungeon, the priſon of my Henry. I was perfectly acquainted with the houſe, becauſe whenever I travelled that way with Madame de Navarre, ſhe pointed it out to me, as being a noble piece of archi-

tecture. I therefore proceeded towards it, and arrived at it in a ſhort time.

The caſtle is quite after the Gothic taſte. A draw-bridge and a mote adorns it; the ramparts are higher than I ever ſaw any before. The country all around conſiſts only of Hamlets, inhabited by peaſants; one houſe only appears, which is larger and ſuperior to all the reſt; it is ſituated ſo contiguous to the caſtle, that it almoſt appears an outhouſe belonging to it.

To this houſe I went, and with an agitated heart, knocked at the door with the end of my whip, as there appeared not any knocker, whereby I might make myſelf heard. A clowniſh boy opened it.

"WHO

"Who lives here, my young friend?" ſaid I.

"My maſter, to be zarten," anſwered he.

"Who is your maſter, pray?"

"A man, to be zure."

I ſaw the boy thought himſelf witty; it was therefore uſeleſs to ſtand parleying with him; and I began to think of going, when he ſtopped me with, "Stay a little, Lady; may-be maſter may come and ſpeak t'-ye." He then went in, and ſoon after returned with his maſter. The good man no ſooner ſaw me, than he ſtarted back, and exclaimed, "Who are you?"

"Permit me to aſk the ſame queſtion, before I can anſwer you," ſaid I.

"My name is Du Lac" ſaid he.

" Then behold in me the daughter of Anjou and Adelfrida."

" The daughter of Anjou! reiterated he. " Why then here, and in this diſguiſe? But I am tiring you with impertinent queſtions, while you ſeem fatigued and faint. Enter then, my ſweet young lady, and partake of the ſtore my humble cot affords."

My horſe was given to the care of the boy, and I went in with my hoſt. After partaking of a little refreſhment, I related to him my narrative; nor feared to truſt it to him, who had been ſo faithful to my father.

" Alas! my dear lady, I tremble for you; but if it is in my little power to aſſiſt you, I ſhall do it with pleaſure; and while you think proper to honour my humble

humble cottage with your commands, it is entirely at your ſervice."

I returned Du Lac a thouſand thanks, and took up my reſidence with him. Yeſterday, as I was rambling about this houſe (a cottage it can hardly be called) a door, which I never before obſerved, attracted my notice. I endeavoured to enter it, but it was faſt. It awakened my curioſity; and I went in ſearch of Du Lac, and queſtioned him concerning it. He declared that he knew nothing of the place I mentioned. I took him therefore, and pointed it out to him. He aſſured me, that he had never noticed the door before. Every hope of a key to enable me to ſee what it contained

tained, was of courſe obliterated; and I retired, quite chagrined with diſappointment. In about a quarter of an hour I again viſited this ſolitary ſpot. My heart was bent on a diſcovery, and an inexpreſſible ſomething drew me to it. I examined it from top to bottom; and at length eſpied in one of the upper corners a bolt. My ſpirits were quite exhilarated at this diſcovery; and with a haſty hand I drew it back. The door flew open; but a total darkneſs enveloped all that it contained. I ran and procured a lighted taper; it diſplayed to me a room that had the appearance of a chapel. The lofty ſealing was of ſtucco; the room was very large; and all round it were windows formed quite in the antique

tique manner of painted glaſs. A garden, or ſomething of that nature, muſt be behind; for all the windows, except one, were ſhaded by a thick grown ivy.

" The ſtoried windows, richly dight,
" Caſt a dim religious light."

Although I admired the ſtructure, I could not help returning very diſſatisfied with my diſcovery.

Oh! Matilda, you little know the pangs of my heart. " I muſt," thought I, " invent ſome other ſtratagem, whereby to enter the manſion of the Earl."

" I muſt ſee my Henry, if I die in the attempt. Death is not more terrifying to Romelia, than to be parted from her Henry." —Ah! a ſudden thought has ſtruck me—

me—I'll visit the chapel once more.

FAREWELL, remember me to Augusta.

Your's,

ROMELIA.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

Lady Matilda Seymour to the Counteſs de St. Clare.

(with the former encloſed).

London

ALAS, Adelaide, Auguſta and myſelf are nearly diſtracted. Six long months and a week are elapſed, and not the ſmalleſt account of Romelia and Henry. Oh, my dear madam, what is become of them! Surely, they are no more! Dear Romelia! ſacred name! Ah! I fear there exiſts not a being that I can call Romelia! Months have ſucceeded each other, and ſtill that incomprehenſible myſtery, that dreadful ſilence continues. Some

Some extraordinary cauſe muſt have occaſioned it. Ill-fated Romelia! unhappy Henry!—I have been with the Queen. A myſtery was conveyed in her words that makes me tremble. She knows where Romelia is; nay more, I fear ſhe is informed of the origin of her birth.—She ſaid to me, with a ſarcaſtic ſneer,—"Madneſs is very good, Matilda, to elucidate a myſtery."

I cannot, however, get from her Majeſty any intelligence of Romelia. I knelt down, caught her hand in a paroxiſm of grief, and intreated her to inform me, if ſhe knew any thing of the dear woman. She aroſe, and with a contemptuous look, thus replied, "When people are preſumptious, they muſt be mortified."———

I can

I can write no more. Enclosed is the letter I had from poor Romelia, when she was at the house of Du Lac: you will see it is concluded in a mysterious manner.

"Adieu,

"MATILDA SEYMOUR."

LETTER

LETTER V.

Lady Seymour, to Lady Matilda Seymour.

DEAR Matilda! happineſs ſeems once more inclined to ſmile on me. I ſend this expreſs, to beg you will be ready at Farnham Grove, on Wedneſday next, to recieve once more to your heart Romelia and your brother Henry.

WHEN I finiſhed my laſt letter to you, I lighted my taper; and returned again to the ſolitary chapel. I examined it very minutely all round. The window which I had obſerved to be without any ivy about it, I found

was

was not glaſs, but wood. After a while, I perceived a ſmall latch connected with it, that was almoſt inviſible. I touched it, and a door inſtantly flew open. My courage, which as yet had not failed me, now ſunk—my heart trembled—every nerve was convulſed—I ſtarted back—and was going to return, when an inexpreſſible ſomething revived me, and bid me proceed. My taper gave a tolerable light, and I went forward. I now entered a ſpacious hall, which was built perfectly round; and I inſtantly recognized the famous STATUE ROOM of the Earl of Shrewſbury.

IN the middle of this room was an equeſtrian ſtatue; the right arm of which was broke off. I

leaned myſelf againſt the broken part, and took a full ſurvey of the place. All round it were arches for ſtatues; moſt of which were filled with Greek ſtatues, one only excepted, which was Achillean. The avenue by which I had entered, was one of the unoccupied arches. I obſerved that a latch was likewiſe on the inſide. I therefore cloſed the door; for ſhould I be ſurprized, I reſolved no one ſhould know which way I came in.

At the upper end of the room was another door, which I imagined led to the other apartments. I ſtood for a few ſeconds in a deep reverie, thinking in what manner I ſhould proceed; when I was rouzed by a deep and penetrating ſigh, which

ſeemed

ſeemed to echo from a contiguous room. I involuntarily ſtarted forward; the door was fortunately unlocked. I opened it, and a train of apartments now appeared before me. I knew not which to ſelect; when a ſecond ſigh of, "Oh, my Romelia!" made me exclaim in a ſoft tone of extaſy, "This, this muſt be the chamber of my Henry!" Without heſitation I opened the door, and a dark and diſmal room preſented itſelf to my view. In the middle of which hung a ſorry lamp, which was the only light. A couch at the upper end of the room ſupported the form of my Henry. The ſight of him was too unexpected for me.—I flew to him—caught him in my eager arms—and claſped him to

my panting boſom. The joy was too exquiſite. I gave a loud ſhriek Ah, fatal moment! "Do I live—Do I brea'he?" cried the delighted Henry. "Is it poſſible that I ſee my love, my life, my Romelia!"

BEFORE I could anſwer him we were ſurprized by the appearance of the Earl and his ſon, at a door oppoſite to that by which I came in. The door was guarded by two centinels, who hearing my ſhrieks alarmed his Lordſhip. He came inſtantly to the chamber, to ſee the cauſe; his ſon ſlowly followed. A meek degree of piety ſhaded a countenance the moſt beautiful I had ever ſeen (my Henry excepted). Horror almoſt petrified me, at ſeeing my moſt ſanguine hopes, which had been ſo lately elevated

ed to ſuch a high degree, thus n a moment cruſhed to atoms. I claſped my hands, and raiſed my pityful eyes to heaven, while my heart murmured, "Oh, thou avenging God! wilt thou never more permit me to be happy?"

The Earl advanced, and in a tremendous voice demanded, who I was, that dared ſo boldly to intrude?

"One," replied I, in a tone equally haughty, "who deſpiſes you, who thinks you beneath her; and who, were ſhe in poſſeſſion of her right, could make ſuch a miſcreant as you tremble." I then turned from him with indignation.

"A woman, as I live," replied he: "may I be permitted to aſk who you are?"

"THE wife of Seymour," replied my Henry, with ſpirit.

"Go," ſaid the Earl to one of the guards, "with greateſt expedition to the Queen, and inform her, that the wife of Henry Seymour has attempted his releaſe. Tell her Majeſty alſo, that I wait her commands, to know what I am to do with them both.—The guard obeyed—then turning to his ſon, "Continue with them, Walter," ſaid he, "till the meſſenger returns; and I ſhall order two more centinels to guard the oppoſite door." The youth bowed, and the Earl left the room.

"THINK not, my friend," ſaid the gentle Walter, as he advanced to us, and took the hand of my Henry, "that I remain here as a guard

a guard over you. Had I known that Seymour was a priſoner, I would have endeavoured to releaſe him 'ere now; but my father is ſo exceedingly ſecret in his tranſactions, that I have hitherto been totally a ſtranger to your confinement." This addreſs, delivered in the ſoft and endearing tone of ſympathy, and uninfluenced by any prejudice or intereſt, awakened my gratitude. The words—the manner—the language ſunk into my ſoul; and poured a balm of hope into my diſtracted heart. My Henry preſſed me to his boſom, and dried my tears. "Weep not, my Romelia, we ſhall yet be happy," ſaid he tenderly.

"Alas! my Henry, I fear we ſhall never be ſo! happineſs has fled, fled for ever—a dark cloud

obſcures every ſuch cheering thought."

"INDEED, fair lady," ſaid the compaſſionate Walter, "you carry your deſpondency too far. I have a ſiſter equally gentle, and almoſt as lovely as yourſelf. Permit me to introduce her to you. A woman's ſoftneſs may be more congenial with the preſent indiſpoſition of your ſpirits; and may extend farther towards ſoothing your wounded heart, than any perſuaſives I can make uſe of.

"WORDS are too feeble to expreſs my gratitude," replied I; "but are you not commiſſioned by your father not to leave us?"

"I ſhall not long be abſent," replied he; and waving his hand gracefully, he left the room; but

ſoon

ſoon returned with a moſt beautiful female. "This, my dear Julia, is the lady, whom in a few words, I have made you acquainted with," ſaid the generous youth, as he joined our hands. The fair maid preſſed me to her boſom: and in the moſt endearing tone aſked me, if ſhe could by any means be of ſervice to me, or aſſiſt to alleviate my ſorrows?" I returned her my thanks, and told her, that I ſolicited only her friendſhip. "That, then, is wholly yours," replied the gentle Julia. She ſtaid ſome time with us, and then retired, for fear her father ſhould ſurpriſe her. The time at length arrived that the Earl, followed by a domeſtic, entered the room.

"Go,

"Go, Walter," ſaid he, to his ſon, "and take Lord Henry up to the ſtrong room, at the top of the caſtle. I appoint you Governor over him; be careful, therefore, that your priſoner does not eſcape!" Then, turning to the ſervant, "As I think I can rely on your fidelity, I entruſt to you this lady. Her priſon is to be the ſubterraneous apartment."

At this ſound I felt every vein freeze with horror. Would you believe it, Matilda? Romelia, the haughty Romelia, knelt—yes, knelt to a poor wretched miſcreant—but knelt in vain.—My brain yet fires with indignation at the thought! And what do you imagine I ſolicited? Nothing more than to let one priſon contain us both—but he was inexorable,

able both to tears and entreaties. The countenance of the timid youth, his ſon, beſpoke a ſilent agony exceſſively moving.

"Oh, why did my Romelia attempt to releaſe me!" exclaimed my Henry, "why make herſelf a voluntary priſoner, and me doubly miſerable by ſeeing her ſo! Come my love, kneel no longer," aſſiſting me to riſe; "Heaven will yet look down with pity on us."———

"Take her," ſaid the unfeeling Earl, "to the place allotted her."——Oh heaven, how can I relate the indignity I ſuſtained! The daughter of Anjou and Adelfrida was dragged frantic by a baſe-born domeſtic to a little cell under ground. My Henry was held by two guards, while he

he ſaw his Romelia torn from him, with her hair diſhevelled, and drowned in tears.——Yes,

" In ſpite of me, my eyes did overflow,
" And muſt I weep the wrongs I ſhould
" revenge?"

The lovely Julia, alarmed at the noiſe, flew to know the cauſe; but ſeeing me in this condition, ſhe fainted in the arms of her attendant; a fortunate eccentricity took poſſeſſion of every wounded faculty, and deprived me of the agonizing remembrance of my condition. I remained a long time inſenſible, as I have been informed; but at length reaſon reſumed her empire, and I had once more the power of ruminating on all that had paſſed. Oh, that my ſenſes had never returned; then

then had I continued a ſtranger to the horrors of my ſituation! —Behold me! yes, Matilda, behold me extended on a miſerable couch, in a confined and dreary room, entirely made of ſtone. At the upper end of it was a door, with a railing, through which my food was every day put. Not even my keeper entered this dungeon. Romelia was not formed for ſuch hardſhips. Heaven, however, kindly beſtowed on her an undaunted ſoul; for when Henry was given to her, ſhe ſtood in need of it.——No ſooner were my ſenſes returned, than I formed the reſolution of attempting my eſcape. At the lower end of the room, I obſerved ſome looſe ſtones. I endeavoured to lift them up; and with

with difficulty ſucceeded. Some new dug earth now appeared; but being fatigued with my labour, I threw myſelf on my couch to recover my exhauſted ſtrength.

SLEEP now took poſſeſſion of me; and a viſion preſented itſelf to my imagination, that nothing on earth will be able to eraſe the recollection of. A ſuper-celeſtial form ſtood before me,—a ſmile illuminated her heavenly countenance—and in a ſoft mellefluent voice, ſhe thus addreſſed me,——

"ROMELIA, my child, thy Henry is releaſed; and thou too ſhalt eſcape; but be ſure to remember and avenge the death of Adelfrida, thy mother, on the perfidious Elizabeth." The form diſappeared,

diſappeared, and I awoke; but the remembrance of the viſion was grafted on my ſoul.

I removed the mould, and perceiving a flat ſtone door, with an iron bolt, I unbolted it, and lifted it up. A deſcent of ſtairs now appeared; the declivity of which made me tremble, yet I proceeded forward, however, although a total darkneſs deprived me of every hope. As I walked I was revived a little, at perceiving a glimmering light at a diſtance. I examined and found it proceeded from a ſmall barrocaded window, which was at the ſide of a flight of ſteps. I deſcended them, and found at the top a door, like that I had entered by. I opened it, and with difficulty crept through.

THE place which now contained me, was no leſs than the garden belonging to the caſtle. The firſt thing I did, was to kneel down and return heaven my thanks for this fortunate dejugation. An arbour now attracted my notice; into which I entered, and found the young Lord Talbot penſively ſeated.

"ROMELIA eſcaped!" exclaimed he, in a tone of ſurpriſe.

"YES," replied I, "but ſay, how is my Henry?"

"WELL, and ſafe," replied he, "my father is abſent! therefore you alſo are ſafe. Sit down, then, and I will relate to you what has happened." I ſat down, and he thus continued.

"No

"No ſooner were you parted from your Henry, than you became a prey to madneſs. Unfortunately you diſcovered that you was the daughter of Anjou and Adelfrida. This intelligence my father inſtantly forwarded to the Queen. She returned immediate orders that you ſhould be properly ſecured; and not to let you eſcape by any means. Your priſon was accordingly changed for a more ſecure one; and no one knew where it was but my father and one domeſtic. All the art of which I am maſter, I made uſe of to know where you was kept; but without effect. Your madneſs continued a long time. At length, however, it ceaſed, and from that period your Governor had ſtrict orders never

to enter your priſon. You know I was appointed Governor over Henry; my honour therefore, was concerned, and I dared not ſuffer him to eſcape: but it did not preclude me from the liberty of making uſe of ſtratagems for his releaſe. To this end I contrived a ſcheme, aſſiſted by my ſiſter Julia. She aſked permiſſion of her father to pay a cuſtomary viſit to her aunt—he conſented. Inſtead of going, ſhe remained concealed in the caſtle. My part was to feign myſelf ill, that I might reſign my charge; which was accordingly transferred to the perſon who had the care of you. Laſt night, when all in the houſe were aſleep, I and Julia went up, and ſet at liberty your Henry. But after all, he would not ſtir a ſtep without Romelia.

I at

I at length perſuaded him to go, but not till I had promiſed to join him half way with yourſelf. Julia went with him, that ſhe might be ready to attend you, when you came. No ſooner was my father informed that Henry was fled, than he ſat out to inform the Queen; and I was juſt meditating how to accompliſh your releaſe, when you preſented yourſelf before me. Come then, too charming Romelia, let us loſe no time; but go and join the enraptured Henry." He then procured two excellent horſes; and we rode on, till we came to the poor little inn, where my Henry waited. It is totally out of my power to deſcribe to my dear Matilda our meeting. You may conjecture we were

all in extaſy; but it was ſomewhat interrupted by the ſymptoms of a fever, which hovered over my Henry; though, thank heaven, it ſoon arrived at a criſis. He is not yet quite recovered; which obliges us to remain at this inferior inn. However, I hope to embrace my Matilda on Wedneſday; and preſent to her a beloved brother, and two charming friends.

Adieu,

ROMELIA.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

Lady Julia Talbot to Lady Adela Villiers.

Farnham Grove.

OH, my Adela! what will become of Julia! that once innocent Julia! Oh, that I could reſign an exiſtance that I am become unworthy of! Adela, I love!—Love to a degree of diſtraction!—and the object of my love is—a married man! My heart revolts—and every nerve ſhudders at the idea! Ill-fated, criminal Julia!—yet I love, and muſt, and will have my paſſion returned!—Ah, what have I wrote!

After reading the laſt ſentence, which has eſcaped from my un-

guarded pen, you can perceive—alas—how changed I am! Brought up under the tender eye of an affectionate mother, my ſoul knew no vice but by name. Often have I wondered how two hearts ſo different as ours, could be joined in ſo firm a friendſhip. Your aſylum from your infancy, a diſſimulating court, you might early have imbibed the pernicious examples that were daily practiſed before you—yet I ever did, and ever ſhall love you.——I informed you, in my laſt, of the whole hiſtory of Henry and Romelia; but I did not tell you that I loved Henry, with an ardour that equalled that of Romelia—yet he deigns not to think on Julia. My poor Walter, too, I ſee is far advanced

in

in a paſſion for the fair obſtacle of all my wiſhes—yet that obſtacle muſt be moved.—It muſt, by all that's ſacred—My heart recoils at the idea, and retards from every reſolution, as quick as it is formed. Write to me, my friend, and ſtrive to ſoothe the deſpairing ſoul of

JULIA TALBOT.

LETTER

LETTER VII.

Lady Adela Villiers to Lady Julia Talbot.

London.

HOW is it poſſible that Julia, the gentle Julia, can be thus metamorphoſed — but love, all-powerful love, gives place to all things. You bid me write, and ſoothe you. How can ſuch a wretch as me attempt a taſk ſo arduous. Yet I cannot deny your requeſt. Left an orphan at the the moſt early period, I became an outcaſt to the world; but the daughter of the Duke of Buckingham was not to remain ſo long. I had but one relation in the world, which was my couſin

ſin George, to whom the title of my father ſucceeded. Thus was I left without a ſingle friend. Her Majeſty thought me an object of pity, and took me under her protection. I was educated under her own eye; and being modelled after ſo bad an original, I became an adept in every vice. My beauty and accompliſhments were ſoon the univerſal topic; and being an heireſs, and under the protection of royalty, I had numerous admirers. My young heart declared in favour of one; and to grant him the happineſs he viciouſly ſought for, I ſacrificed my virtue. But never, no never ſhall his name be revealed. Oh, that I could reſign to oblivion the hatred recollection! Yet, my Julia, while my diſgrace

grace was flagrant, he dared to live, and wed another. Am I not loſt? and owe I not my ruin to my love? Weak, credulous Adela! Ah, has he not deſtroyed me—he, on whom I doted—he, for whoſe ſake I yielded my honour and happineſs! Has he not impiouſly dared every tie of juſtice! and yet he lives—but this poor—this weak arm ſhall be the meſſenger of death to him. He ſhall not long eſcape the wound he has given—ſoon ſhall he fall and do ſome juſtice to my wrongs. I would—but cannot be calm—"My ſoul o'er-charged with pride and hatred breaks out in paſſion,

"Bold as my wrongs,
"And dreadful as my purpoſe!"

Oh,

Oh, could I but pinch his ſoul with woe—his heart with pain—rack his reſtleſs thoughts with diſcontent—wear away his life in endleſs agony—then would I feaſt on the joys of his deſtruction.

"Ah, my Julia, who that is wronged like me, could ſit down calm, and with dull goodneſs, bleſs the undoer's wiſhes. Whene'er I ſtrive to drown the hated memory of my paſt guilt, ſome keen reproach, unmeant, ſtrikes on the jarring ſtring—untunes my ſoul, and rouzes the pale image of my ſhame. Bitter penitence and conſcious guilt, are now the gnawing vultures of my boſom.—Cruſh the traitor, all-avenging Heaven! But Heaven is ſlow to puniſh

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puniſh, — this hand, then ſhall do it!—Yes, he ſhall die!"——

Oh, Julia, how my days have been devoted to one continual vice!—Deaf to conſequences, while rolling forward upon pleaſure's bias! All youth is thus!—but mine is unparalleled—wild and diſorderly beyond conception! When I look back on all the dreadful pile of vices————

" I ſhrink, and frighted memory doth fly
" my ſoul!
" Memory! thou'rt a ſcorpion! To forget
" 'Twere eaſier to blot out the horrid'ſt
" crimes,
" The wrath of heaven, by penitence ap-
" peas'd!
" But what, oh, Memory, can eraſe from
" thee,
" The ills that thou haſt regiſter'd!"

Oh,

Oh, my dear Julia. I have recollected too much. My mind's a chaos. Bring me, Mira, the glittering goblet; and let me bury remembrance in the ſparkling beveridge.———

'Tis paſt, my Julia! I'll think no more!—Take my advice, and inſtil ſeparately into the minds of Henry and Romelia, that demon jealouſy; then will you be able to reap the fruits of your invention. Aſk permiſſion, Julia, to give your friend an invitation to Farnham Grove. I long to ſee this heroic pair. I wiſh to embrace you; and beſides, I am tired of the court, and ſigh for the tranquil country. Adieu.

Your

ADELA WILHELMINA VILLIERS.

LETTER

LETTER VIII.

Lady Matilda Seymour, to the Counteſs de St. Clare.

Farnham Grove.

DEAR Victoria, waving any particular diſcuſſions, permit me to relate conciſely what has occurred ſince my laſt.—I no ſooner received Romelia's letter, than I diſpatched it to you. The Wedneſday following I had the pleaſure of embracing the angelic woman; and ſome time after I informed her of the death of your mother.—"Good God!" ſaid ſhe, "is the guardian of my youth, the protector of my infantine innocence, the promoter of my happineſs, is ſhe no more?

The thought is too affecting—I cannot think of it without emotion." The tears poured down her cheeks; and she retired to her closet. Our united solicitations were not enough to stifle the sorrows of her heart. She would see no one, nor come out of her room the whole day. I then made my remarks on my new friends. Julia is an angelic being—her person is beyond description—and her manner truly delicate.

" She's more than writing can express,
" Or youthful poets fancy, when
" They love."————

Yet I am sure she is unhappy—secret passion consumes her—and she demands all one's love and pity. —— Walter—lay still my heart,

heart, and throb not with ſuch violence—Walter is a ſtriking reſemblance of his ſiſter; and has alas, my dear Adelaide, made too deep an impreſſion on the ſuſceptible heart of thy Matilda. Yes, I love him with all that energy of madneſs, with which poor Romelia's actions are pregnant; nor will any power on earth ever be able to rival my feelings. Yet, ah yet, he never can be mine. Alike his ſiſter in every reſpect—he loves, and Romelia is the object of his love. Ah, my ſweet friend, he has nouriſhed an unguarded paſſion, that will annihilate him! A rapid conſumption has already taken poſſeſſion of his feeble frame; and a viſible decline is obvious to all. Even Julia perceives it, and entreats him

him to have advice: he declines every mean for his recovery.—One day Julia was urging him with more than uſual warmth, and I joined my own entreaties; but finding him inflexible, the tears ſtarted involuntarily in my eyes. He perceived them; and catching my hand with fervour, exclaimed, "Sweet tears of ſympathy! and do you condeſcend, lovely Matilda, to weep for the wretched Walter?—But, ah, perhaps you love like me—our feelings may be ſimilar—yet, oh, may the object of your gentle paſſion not be ſo diſtant from your ſanguine hopes, as mine. This is the ardent prayer of a miſerable victim to an unguarded paſſion."

He left the room precipitately—the conflict was too great for my

exhauſted ſpirits—I fainted in the extended arms of Julia—and ah, my Adelaide, how I wiſh that the ſpark of life had been entirely extinguiſhed!

A few days ago Julia received a letter. After reading it, ſhe turned to Romelia, and ſaid, "Will you pardon the liberty I am going to take—which is to give an invitation to a friend of mine, who wiſhes very much to ſpend a week or two with me in the country?"

"My houſe is ever at your diſpoſal, or any friends you ſhall think proper to invite, my dear Julia," replied Romelia.—An addition to our party is therefore expected—A carriage ſtops—a moſt beautiful woman deſcends—her dreſs is elegant, beyond conception.—She is

void

void of that ſtiffneſs, which generally attends ſuch ſumptuous apparel.—She looks perfectly eaſy — Julia flies to her—they claſp each other to their boſoms, and embraces.—A domeſtic informs me, that I am requeſted to join the group—Adieu.—my reſpects to the Count,

MATILDA SEYMOUR.

LETTER IX.

Lady Adela Villiers to Elizabeth.

Farnham Grove.

YOUR Majeſty was informed of my ſad tale, together with my fixed determination on revenge. When I received the letter from Julia, the name of Henry Seymour rouzed every dormant ſpark, and worked me up to frenzy. I flew to you, and preſented you with the letter. Your being in a more tranquil mood, enabled you to read it with more attention; and you inſtantly perceived, that it were the ſame Henry and Romelia that made you ſo uneaſy.

" Write

"Write my dear Adela," ſaid you, "to your friend, and tell her to invite you to ſpend ſome time with her—then will you be able to wreck your reſentment on Henry; and if he dies, Romelia will never ſurvive him. I then ſhall be free from every apprehenſion on that account."

Could I refuſe my Queen, the protector of my infancy, and the friend of my youth?—Impoſſible! I complied, and am for that purpoſe at Farnham Grove.

When I was introduced to Henry, I feigned ſurprize—ſtarted back——and exclaimed in a whiſper, "Farnham Grove belong Henry! had I known it, I never would have viſited the place; but don't for pity's ſake appear to know

know me."—I forced a bluſh, and caſt my eyes on the floor.

"I ſhall not," replied he, like the monkey in the fable. I would not burn my own fingers; therefore I perſuaded Julia to write two anonymous letters—the one to Henry, informing him that his wife was great with Lord Talbot: and that the walks ſhe uſually took in the Grove every evening, was contrived purpoſely to hide their unlawful connection. That if he wiſhed to be ſatisfied of it, he might be witneſs to their interview that evening.

THE letter to Romelia informed her, that Henry and Julia held a criminal intercourſe. You never ſaw a poor creature tremble ſo as Julia did, while ſhe wrote them.—"Human nature recoils at the idea,"

idea," ſaid ſhe. "Is it poſſible that I can ſtigmatize my brother and myſelf, and make a lovely pair miſerable! I fear Adela," continued ſhe, "you are driving me into a vortex of vice; from which I ſhall never be able to extricate myſelf. For heaven's ſake let me retreat while yet I have power; and though the love I have for Henry ſhould annihilate me—yet let me die, with my honour unpoluted!" I uſed all the artful elocution I was miſtreſs of to diſſipate this temporary remorſe, and ſucceeded. The letters were diſpatched; and at dinner I had the pleaſure of ſeeing they had taken the wiſhed-for effect.

In the evening Romelia took her uſual walk; and juſt at this period Walter was ſitting alone in the

muſick room. A domeſtic, by my orders, entered and delivered to him the following note:

"ROMELIA deſires the compa-
"ny of her friend in the Grove;
"in order to alleviate his private
"ſorrows, and talk of the object
"of his love."

THE enraptured Walter flies—Henry too follows, in order to be ſatisfied—I likewiſe, muſt go to hear their converſation. For a ſhort time, therefore, adieu.

* * * * *

WALTER talked with all the fire of love; and Romelia thinking he loved Matilda, aſſured him of her intereſt; nay, went

ſo

far, as to promiſe him happineſs.—I heard enough, and returned to the parlour, where Matilda was ſitting. In a moment after Henry entered—a wild diſorder ſhaded his countenance—and coming up to Matilda, he caught her hand, and exclaimed, "Adieu, my friend, my ſiſter!—adieu, perhaps for ever!"———

He then left the room with haſte—the aſtoniſhed Matilda ſtarted up—the power of ſpeech was denied her—a vacant ſtare was all.—An unfelt pretence of friendſhip made me follow him, and intreat him to return—but he was inexorable.———

The preſent confuſion of the houſe is inexpreſſible. Walter is taken dangerouſly ill; and his life is deſpaired of. As they may think me

me an intruder, I have taken my leave. Beſides, I fear a diſcovery, and ſhall therefore go; but I ſhall take lodgings in the environs of this diſtreſſed habitation; for my revenge is not yet ſatiated. Should Henry return, he ſhall die by the hand of Adela.

WILHELMINA VILLIERS.

LETTER.

LETTER X.

Lord Seymour to Lady Matilda Seymour.

Dover.

WILL Matilda condeſcend to peruſe a few lines from a wretched exile from home and happineſs? Methinks you will; therefore, I will eaſe my overburthened ſoul by writing to you only.

THE day I left the Grove, I received a letter with no ſignature. It informed me, that Romelia and Walter loved each other; and this unknown enemy ſaid, If I wanted a convincing proof, I need only viſit the Grove, where they would meet that evening.

evening. I went and heard Romelia promiſe him happineſs.—It was too much for my agonized ſoul!—Did I think Romelia could change—alas, I have too plain a demonſtration that ſhe is falſe.—She, who has declared in the moſt ſolemn manner, that her Henry was dearer to her ſoul than heaven—but oh, thoſe pleaſing dictates all are huſhed, and black detection now ſupplies their place.—Has ſhe not encouraged my rival's expectations?—Yes—I was witneſs to it,—Walter triumphs—and I am utterly undone!—Write to me, my dear ſiſter—tell me if the fair inconſtant ever mentions the name of the diſtracted

HENRY SEYMOUR.

LETTER

LETTER XI.

Lady Matilda Seymour, to Lord Seymour.

IS it poſſible that Matilda lives!—Yes, yes, they would not take me with him.—Henry—dear brother—procure me ſome water—the ſtreams are dry—and Matilda's brain is on fire.——It burns, it burns with ardour.—Come then, my kind Henry, and extinguiſh the piercing flame for thy poor Matilda—for none will put it out, nor give me eaſe.—Ha! ha! ha! —"Walter triumphs," did you ſay?—It is the grave alone that triumphs—did I not ſee him die—and yet I live! Break, break thou ſtubborn

ſtubborn heart; and let me reſt!—Dear Henry, when I am dead, bury me in the tomb of Walter—let our bones mingle, and let one earth cover us both.—Julia, too, poor Julia—who told her of poiſon?—You would have forgiven her—Romelia did—It was not her—It was Adela—cruel Adela!—Henry will you return? will you ſee your Matilda once more?—Come, then, my brother—Romelia will forget the paſt—and you may, perhaps, catch the laſt ſigh of your expiring

MATILDA.

LETTER

LETTER XII.

Lady Julia Talbot to Lord Seymour.

STRUGGLING with dying agonies, the wretched Julia dares to addreſs the injured Henry!——Will you condeſcend, beſt of men, to pardon a dying penitent? Methinks you will—that hope alone tranquilizes my laſt moments.—But permit me, while yet my weak ſtate will allow of a little exertion, to endeavour to juſtify myſelf; and let my willingneſs to repair the injury I have done you, be ſome mitigation of my crime.

To ſee Henry, was to love; and I no ſooner gazed on you, than

than I felt the all-powerful influence.—Adela was the confidant of my paſſion.—It was ſhe who forced me to write the letter you received.—Another, of a ſimilar nature, was ſent to Romelia. The finiſh of this plot ſhe took on herſelf; and it ſucceeded—ah—but too well. Lady Seymour, the gentle friend of your boſom, was truly innocent: for, when Walter urged his paſſion, Romelia thought that Matilda was the object of his love; and thinking he only wiſhed her to intercede for him, ſhe promiſed him, if it was in her power, he ſhould be happy. This was the error which I have attempted to rectify; and I hope ſincerely that I may ſucceed.

When

WHEN you departed, the affair was brought to light. It had too great an effect on the ſhattered conſtitution of Walter—he pined—he drooped—ah—my God—can I write the annihilating word!—Walter—the friend of my heart—the beloved brother of my affections—three days after—expired! He died in the arms of the frantic Matilda!— Yet there was a vacuum to fill—which was cloſed by the diſtracted Julia!— Upon the death of my brother, I reſolved not to live!—Poiſon I had previouſly procured.—I drank the cordial draft—and then confeſſed to Romelia the whole.—She wept,—yes—the tender—the generous Romelia wept at my fate; nor vented one reproach at the wrongs I had done her.—My crime, I

hope, my death will expiate.—The fatal poiſon which I took cauſed not the wiſhed-for haſty death; but ſeems to be ſlow and lingering before it terminates.—Return Henry—Romelia will not utter one reproach—and 'ere you can take a farewell glimpſe, oblivion will caſt her ſable ſhade over the form of

JULIA TALBOT.

LETTER

LETTER XIII.

Lady Matilda Seymour, to the Counteſs De St. Clare.

HEAVEN, in pity to my friends, has returned me my ſenſes. In gratitude, therefore, I ſhall let the paſt lay dormant; nor once attempt to look back. Henry and Romelia are again friends, and a calm tranquility has taken place—but my prognoſticating heart ſays, that inquietude will have but a temporary ceſſation.

ELIZABETH, who knows that Romelia is the daughter of Adelfrida, will never ceaſe her perſecutions, till my friend is no more. A copy of a letter I found

in the room, which Lady Adela Villiers occupied, is but too convincing a proof of it. I was ſorry ſhe had not finiſhed it: but it was left off, where ſhe goes into the garden to hear the converſation between Romelia and——

I CANNOT, dear Victoria, write his name; however, I ſhall incloſe it for your peruſal. Julia breathed not her laſt until the day after Henry's return. She had the————Ha! what confuſed crepitations is that!—loud cries iſſue from the garden—a number of confuſed domeſtics keep running—my agitation is ſo great, that I tremble to go———

* * * * *

THE blank is filled! Not one ſmall avenue to miſery remains! Can I relate the paſt—I do not think

think I ſhall be able—the recollection harrows up my ſoul—and frighted memory recoils—yet I muſt attempt to relate the ſad tale of woe. Uſed of late to innumerable ills, I am almoſt habituated to pain.

When I left off writing, I directed my ſteps to the ſcene of confuſion; the remembrance of which is terrifying indeed! On the ground lay Henry, weltering in blood—the diſtracted Romelia was kneeling down by him, and ſupporting him! At a ſmall diſtance appeared another ſight, which made me ſhudder. It was Lady Adela Villiers bleeding with violence!—the dagger, which ſhe had plunged in her breaſt, ſtill remained there—nor did any one attempt to extract it.

"ADIEU, Henry," ſaid ſhe, "our dying together, mollifies the terrors of death. Though you refuſed a union with me in life, my fixed determination was, that our blood ſhould mingle, and that we ſhould yet join in death! Farewell, then, though I die firſt, I have the ſatisfaction of knowing you muſt ſoon follow! Ah, my God! I am going—all is night; the dark realms are open to receive me——farewell, for ever!"—A deep groan ſucceeded, and ſhe cloſed her eyes, to open them no more.

"ADIEU, my Romelia, moſt worſhipped of woman, adieu!" ſaid the exhauſted Henry. "Let not my death affect you too much--live, and be happy—live for the ſake of your beloved unborn!—

unborn—we ſhall again meet, my beloved Romelia, in regions of eternal light."—Then turning to me, "Continue your friendſhip, dear Matilda, to my Romelia, for the ſake of your Henry—the brother whom you have ſo often declared you loved." Raiſing the hand of each to his lips—he ſigh'd—then breath'd no more.——

"He is not dead!" ſaid Romelia, in a tone of horror. "He ſhall not die!" Then catching the bloody corps in her arms, ſhe preſſed it to her boſom—caſt her eyes up to the heavens—gave an agonizing groan, and fainted!———

I had both the corps conveyed into the houſe, and put on two beds; but continued in the garden

garden, with Romelia, in hopes that the air would revive her. At length ſhe opened her eyes—"I am going home, dear Matilda!"———

"You ſhall go home, my love."

"I am going!"———

"Going, where, Romelia?"—

RAISING, with difficulty, her right hand, ſhe pointed with her fore-finger to the horizon.—"That," ſaid ſhe, in a faultering accent, "is the home I am repairing to. There ſhall I meet my Henry; and no revenging Adela will part us again! Her head fell on my boſom, and my tears bathed her pallid cheeks.—I had her conveyed to bed; ſoon after which ſhe miſcarried. For ſome time her life was deſpaired of; but at length ſhe grew

better

better; though her ſenſes, I dread, are reached their climax, and never, never more, I fear, will ſhe recover her reaſon.

A day after their death, I had the remains of Henry and Lady Adela interred in a tomb. I have given orders likewiſe for an expreſſive pile to be raiſed, to adorn the grave of a beloved brother. On the top of which is to be an urn, and on it a repreſentation of Hope, pointing to futurity. As the burying place lies contiguous to the Grove, I I can often viſit the tomb of Henry.

HENRY never was guilty of more than one youthful indiſcreſſion, which he made me acacquinted with.

WHEN

WHEN he was firſt introduced at court, Lady Adela Villiers ſhone with refulgent luſtre; ſhe was admired by many young men of rank and faſhion—but her affections centered on Henry. That happy envied youth regarded it negligently. However, ſhe made ſuch advances, as no man could refuſe. An intercourſe was therefore held between them, for two months. At that period Romelia came to England—Henry beheld her—loved, and ſoon after married her.

HENRY told me of this juvenile indiſcreſſion, as he often called it; though he never acquainted me with the lady's name. Her proceedings, however, and the letter which I found in her pocket, ſufficiently convinced me that it was her.

her. The letter was directed to the Queen; and ran to the following purport:

"HENRY is returned; and a
" a coaleſcence has taken place;
" for which, I confeſs, I am
" not ſorry; as the terrific fate
" which hovers over him, will
" then be received with greater
" poignancy. Yes,—Henry ſhall
" fall, and Adela ſhall be avenged!
" Yet ſtill I love the inſulting
" tyrant—the cool froſty-hearted
" monſter—love him with all the
" ardour of a youthful paſſion.—
" Indeed, your Majeſty may be
" aſſured that I love him well
" enough to die with him—and
" when dying, I'll ſtrive to catch
" his laſt ſigh—then ſhall I enter
" the gloomy paſſage in peace!—

" Ha!

"Ha! my attendant tells me, "they are now both walking in "the garden—now then is my "time—I fear not to die.

"Adieu, for ever,

"ADELA."

THIS was the end of a woman truly beautiful; and who would have been an ornament to ſociety, had ſhe been early initiated in the principles of virtue, inſtead of be-being expoſed to the vices of a court.

ROMELIA is continually thinking that the Queen is coming to viſit her. A few moments ſince, as I ſat writing, ſhe entered the room, and coming to me, "Dear Matilda," ſaid ſhe, "the Queen is arrived! Why did ſhe not ſend me word of her coming; that I

might

might have received her with that pomp, which is due to her rank." Then, in a whiſper, ſhe continued, "The promiſe I made my mother, has long lain dormant; yet, were I to avenge the death of Adelfrida, I ſhould profane the laws of hoſpitality. I cannot do it, Matilda. THIS once ſhe may remain ſafe."

THE incoherency of Romelia's talk is truly affecting; yet it moſtly tends towards Elizabeth. The dear dejected woman is of late very fond of her lute, and plays continually on it; at the ſame time ſhe ſings ſome little ſonnets of her own compoſing, which abſolutely extort from me a ſympathetic tear. Adieu at preſent,

Your's, affectionately,

MATILDA SEYMOUR.

LETTER

LETTER XIV.

The Counteſs de St. Clare, to the Count de St. Clare.

Farnham Grove.

I ARRIVED here yeſterday, dear Ferdinand. Matilda was aſtoniſhed to ſee me; but ſhe received me with joy. "This is kind in you, indeed, my dear Adelaide, to viſit the afflicted. I feared to hint to you in my laſt, the miſery of my ſituation; but your tender ſympathy and politeneſs, were equal to any information; and you have generouſly came to ſhare in my ſorrows."

Matilda then led me to Romelia, who gazed at me with a vacant ſtare—then threw her head on

on my boſom—and wept. The tears a little relieved her, and at the ſame time in ſome meaſure, recovered her ſenſes.

I have endeavoured to perſuade the diſtracted woman, to return with me to France;—but ſhe rejects every argument I can uſe, becauſe ſhe cannot bear the idea of leaving England. She ſent her ſteward this morning, to make propoſals for the purchaſe of a houſe on Richmond Hill, or ſomewhere near it. There ſhe intends to live, and now and then viſit Farnham Grove.

PRESS my little Emmeline to your heart; and kiſs her for her mother.

Adieu, my Ferdinand,

Your affectionate,

ADEL. VICTORIA DE ST. CLARE.

LETTER

LETTER XV.

Lady Matilda Seymour, to Lady Auguſta Grey.

Richmond.

IN my laſt I informed you of the dear Counteſs's viſit, and of our coming to Richmond. Romelia appears quite pleaſed with this little compact houſe; and is much happier than ſhe has been, ſince the death of Henry.

THE Queen gives to-morrow night a grand maſquerade. All people of quality have free admiſſion. Romelia, therefore, inſiſts on going; nor can the prayers or intreaties of Adelaide and myſelf, prevent her from her

her purpoſe. We are, therefore, obliged, even in oppoſition to our inclinations, to accompany her. The dreſs ſhe has ſelected for the evening is the moſt ſuperb I ever ſaw. It conſiſts of black velvet, gold, muſlin and pearl fringe, and the large diamond roſes, which were bequeathed to her by her father.—Adieu, for the preſent, dear Auguſta; I will finiſh this after the maſquerade.

* * * * *

I almoſt thought it impoſſible that any more ſorrow could affect me—but I was miſtaken!—I little thought that when Romelia expreſſed ſo earneſtly to go to the maſquerade, that ſhe had

had a plot to put in execution.

At a proper hour, however, we went—the room was moſt elegantly illuminated—and every thing ſuperb to a degree. The Queen was ſeated on a throne—her right arm was reſted on a cornucopia—out of which iſſued flowers of the moſt odoriferous ſcent, and which perfumed the whole room. At her feet lay two little boys dreſſed like Cupids. Her dreſs had all the ſplendour of majeſty—too much ſo for an old woman. On her head ſhe wore a crown of diamonds intermixed with rubbies. Every perſon went up to the Queen immediately as they entered room, in order to pay their reſpects. When we arrived, the room was al-

moſt

moſt full. Romelia made me and the Counteſs compliment the Queen before her;—but great God! how ſhall I expreſs my horror at perceiving her draw from under her robe a piſtol, and fire at her Majeſty without heſitation. The aim was well directed; the ball went through her hair, and took off part of her crown. In a moment the whole room was in confuſion; and all the company ſurrounded Lady Seymour———

"WHO are you, preſumptuous woman?" interrogated the Queen. At the ſame time two guards advanced, and held Romelia—"Off, off, ye baſe-born plebians," ſaid ſhe; "behold who I am!" Tearing off her maſk, ſhe thus addreſſed the Queen,—"Behold in me," laying her right hand on

heart, " the daughter of the Duke of Anjou, and Adelfrida daughter of Henry the Eighth; that Adelfrida, whom you poiſoned!" The conviction was too plain—the convulſed countenance of her Majeſty evinced the agony of her mind. " Behold, in me," continued Romelia, " the widow of the murdered Henry Seymour. I lived but to ſee you die;—but ſince fate refuſes me my boon, I have nothing more to do than to join my Henry!" Before any one could imagine what ſhe meant, ſhe drew from her boſom a ſecond loaded piſtol; put it to her temple—it went off!—and ſhe fell to the ground! I and Adelaide ſupported her—ſhe faintly ſmiled on us both, and reſigned

ed her ſoul in tranquil ſilence. —Here let me pauſe——

THE next day a rumour was circulated reſpecting the affair; but like other reports, it was very erroneous. It was nearly, as follows.

"THAT a perſon, unknown, who had taken a diſlike to the Queen, reſolved to be the inſtrument of her death: for which purpoſe, ſhe dreſſed herſelf in the habit of a man, and attended at court with a pair of piſtols conſtantly about her: ſhe then found means to be admitted at the maſquerade, where ſhe fired at the Queen—but miſſing her aim, ſhe immediately ſhot herſelf.

I SHALL now, dear Auguſta, leave the world, truly diſguſted with what I have ſeen of it. I

have ſeen die, the only man on earth I loved—I have followed a beloved brother to the grave—I have likewiſe heard the expiring groan of Romelia, the beloved friend of my heart—and I have learnt, that neither reaſon nor force can prevent a woman from vengeance, when ſhe is impelled to it by motives of love.

All thoſe unhappy cataſtrophes I have ſurvived; but I have drank deeply of the bitter cup of ſorrow. Pangs I have felt, which were equal, if not ſuperior to thoſe of death itſelf. "For if it be the pangs, the throws, the agonizing ſtruggles when ſoul and body part, ſure I have felt it; and there is nothing more to fear."

I ſhall

I ſhall accompany Adelaide back to France; and end the remainder of my days in a cloiſter. Still the death of Romelia is preſent to my view—nor ſhall I ever forget it. Her quivering lips grew pale; and frighted beauty, loth to leave its manſion, ebbed ſlow with the unwilling blood. Adieu, adieu, perhaps for ever.

MATILDA SEYMOUR.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.

The Counteſs de St. Clare, to Lady Auguſta Grey.

Paris.

I AM exceſſively ſorry, dear Auguſta, to be the inſtrument of conveying to you ſuch mournful intelligence. I aſſure you, that every ſtroke of my pen depreſſes my heart with melancholy. Yes, my friend, my feelings are pungent. How aggravated will be your diſtreſs, when you are informed, that Matilda, the generous, the beloved Matilda, is fled for ever. "Ah, where?" ſay you. Oh, Auguſta, ſhe has taken her

her flight into the nether world—ſhe is gone to the bliſsful regions. No ſooner did the dear girl arrive in France, than her feeble frame, already worn out with ſorrow, was attacked with a fever, which terminated in her death. Every attention was paid her, during her illneſs;—but alas, all to no purpoſe! Since her deceaſe, every pompous inſignia has awaited on her. The ſtate room, in which poor Matilda lies, is hung with black ſattin, and covered with tranſparent ſtars of ſilver. Over the chimney-piece is a covering of white ſattin; on which is elegantly wrought two angels, ſupporting a female form, (ſuppoſed to be Matilda) and aſcending with her to the clouds; which appear juſt breaking over their heads.

heads. The coffin in which the dear deceaſed is depoſited, is likewiſe covered with white ſattin, and ornamented with nodding plumes. Her ſhrouds are white ſattin; and the lining of point lace. I would not allow her beautiful hair to to be cut—it lays on her boſom. Her looks are quite placid; and ſhe appears a ſleeping beauty. A gauze veil covers her angelic countenance.

If you wiſh Matilda to be buryed in England, I will attend her remains to you;—but if you will permit her to be interred here, I ſhall have her buried with all that magnificence due to her birth and ſuperior virtues. If however, you would wiſh to be preſent, and take a laſt glimpſe, you need not be acquainted

that

that you have a home at the man-ſion of her, who waits the com-mands, and ſubſcribes herſelf,

Your's,

ADEL. VICTORIA DE ST. CLARE.

LETTER

LETTER XVII.

Lady Auguſta Grey, to Sir Moreton Grey.

Paris.

I HAVE preſſed the corps of my dear Matilda to my boſom, and embraced her for the laſt time. The honour which her memory is treated with, by the Count and Counteſs, has greatly endeared them to me.

YESTERDAY the remains of my ſiſter was interred in the family vault. Adieu, thou ſiſter of my heart!——Beloved Matilda, farewell!————

I SET off for England to-morrow, and then my Grey will join his

Auguſta.

Auguſta to mourn the death of a ſiſter ſo dear.

Adieu,

AUGUSTA GREY.

THE END.

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